



With Compliments of
THE G. Desbarats

ST. LAWRENCE AND ATLANTIC

RAIL-ROAD:

ITS POSITION AS A PRIVATE UNDERTAKING, AND
ADVANTAGES AS A NATIONAL WORK.

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*The EDITH and LORNE PIERCE
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Queen's University at Kingston

THE
ST. LAWRENCE & ATLANTIC RAIL-ROAD:
ITS POSITION AS A PRIVATE ANDERTAKING, AND ADVANTAGES
AS A NATIONAL WORK.

THIS Road, which is intended to connect Montreal with the Atlantic, at Portland and at Boston, is now completed from Montreal to St. Hyacinthe,* a distance of thirty miles, and from Portland towards Montreal for forty miles, forty miles more being under contract, leaving on the American side seventy miles to be contracted for to meet the Canada lines; from Boston it is completed by the Concord and Passumpsic route to Wells-river, within fifty miles of the lines, and by the Connecticut route to Boston, the works are in progress. In Canada ninety-six miles remain to be made to reach the Lines, where a junction will be effected with the above three roads. One of these, the Passumpsic, is ready to push on to the lines the moment progress is made in Canada to meet them. As seen above, the road from Portland is far advanced, the Connecticut is preparing with the Passumpsic, and will also be guided by what will be done in Canada. Those three American roads run through the centre of the four Eastern States—Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine, and in their course are intersected by numerous branch Rail-roads, connecting with the interior of these several States, and all unite with the Canada line, giving it an importance which no other Road possesses. These States are large consumers of produce of the West, which is now forwarded to Albany and thence taken to Boston by Rail-road, or to the several towns on their seaboard by sea, in small craft,

* Notwithstanding the severity of the present winter, the trains have been running regularly every day without being impeded in the least by the snow, owing to an elevated track having been adopted.

from which it is transported by Rail-road or land carriage to the interior. In 1847 the consumption by those States of produce of the west, was estimated from best authorities at 700,000 barrels of flour and 100,000 barrels of pork and lard. With the increase of their population the consumption must increase, especially of flour, the soil of the New England States not being well adapted for raising wheat.

The River St. Lawrence and the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Rail-road must become the great channel through which the produce of the West intended for the Eastern States, whether for their consumption, or for their trade with Europe, South America, the West Indies, or Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Fisheries. The greater facilities afforded by this route and its cheapness in comparison with all others, must eventually turn from the Erie Canal, and even from the Mississippi, a large portion of the trade now borne on their waters. In proof of this it is but necessary to state that bringing into comparison the advantages of Montreal over Albany, as two points equi-distant from Cleveland, the point of departure common to both, a vessel (propeller) of 3000 barrels burthen, will leave Cleveland, reach Montreal without breaking bulk, discharge her cargo, reload at Montreal and be back at Cleveland before the produce intended for Albany will have reached its destination. In this latter case a vessel of similar burthen leaves Cleveland, reaches Buffalo or Oswego, there discharges her cargo into five or six canal boats, which are then towed by horses through the canal at a necessarily slow rate, impeded still more by very numerous lockages,—the six barges requiring numerous relays of twelve horses, and reaching their destination in from twelve to twenty-four days, according to the press of boats at the locks, exclusive of the time required to reach from Cleveland to Buffalo or Oswego, and of unloading and reloading, whereas the same vessel would have reached Montreal by the Lakes and River St. Lawrence in five days; therefore did not the practice prove it in effect, still it must be evident from the above position of those two routes, that the one to Montreal must be the cheaper one. In 1848 flour has been landed in Montreal from Cleveland for thirty cents per barrel. The

lowest cost of transport for the same to Albany would have been seventy-four cents, (and often reaching a dollar) per barrel, thus leaving a difference of forty-four cents in favor of Montreal. The Rail-road from Montreal to the lines will have a most favorable gradient, not over fifty feet ascent per mile in any section, and generally level; the Boston and Albany road has to ascend eighty-four feet per mile in some parts, and generally has heavy grades to surmount; but the distance from Albany to Boston is only 202 miles, whereas it will be from Montreal, 320 to Boston, and 270 to Portland, but the difference of grades will make up for the increased distance, the increase of the power of traction of each engine on the level road being as 320 to 180.

The superiority of the St. Lawrence Route from the West being thus incontrovertibly shewn, being the most speedy and cheap, and the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Rail-Road being nearly if not quite on a par with the Western Rail-Road, it becomes necessary to inquire into the traffic likely to take place on this Road.

BY THE ERIE CANAL,

the Cost of transportation of a barrel of Flour to Albany,

From Cleveland, as above is at the lowest rate	-	074
Albany to Boston,	-	30
		—————
	Freight to Boston,	\$1,04
If forwarded to Portland,	-	12½
		—————
	Freight to Portland,	\$1,16½

BY THE ST. LAWRENCE.

Freight from Cleveland to Montreal,	-	-	030
By Rail-Road to Boston,	-	-	054
			—————
From Cleveland to Boston,	-	-	0,84
" Cleveland to Montreal,	-	-	030
By Rail-Road to Portland,	-	-	050
			—————
		0,80	

Difference in favor of the Montreal and St. Lawrence Rail-Road Route, even taking the lowest rates by the Erie Canal,

To Boston per barrel,	-	-	-	-	020
To Portland, "	-	-	-	-	0,32½

With this difference in favor of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Rail-Road Route, it must be evident that a great portion of the produce of the West, now consumed in the Eastern States, as well as what will be required for Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the Fisheries, as also for the Trade of those States with the West Indies and South America, will pass over this Road when completed; nor must it be forgotten that much of the Flour, &c. forwarded to the Eastern States is sent inland, which passing over this Road, would be left by the train as it progressed, at its destination, and again avoid the cost of forwarding the same inland.

The consumption of Western Produce by the Eastern States, was estimated in 1847, as above stated, at 700,000 barrels of Flour and 100,000 barrels of Pork, Lard and Beef; of this, the State of Maine consumed 300,000 Barrels of Flour, and 40,000 of Pork, &c., for its extensive Lumbering and other manufacturing establishments. The amount of provisions taken from the United States, by Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, is made by Major Robinson, to exceed £400,000 sterling, per annum in value, or 300,000 Barrels of Flour, and 50,000 Barrels of Pork.—These would also pass over this road from its being cheaper than any other, until the Halifax and Quebec Rail-Road be in operation, if not even after; extensive shipments are made of provisions from the United States to the West Indies, South America and Europe,—in 1847 by official returns to the amount of \$68,000,000. The great facilities of the Harbours on the Sea Coast at which terminate the several Rail-Roads connecting with the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Rail-Road as proposed, must of necessity together with the saving effected by the adoption of this Road to convey it, cause a large portion of this Trade to pass over the waters of the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic Rail-Road. Nor must the influence on the Trade by the St. Lawrence, of the Canal lately constructed between Peoria and Chicago, connecting Lake Michigan with the Mississippi, and draining the intervening fertile countries, be overlooked—a large portion of the Trade in Flour and Pork, which hitherto has found its way to New Orleans, exposed to all the dangers of souring and rusting in its long journey in a tropical climate, will be forwarded to the Seaboard

through the cool waters of our great Lakes and the St. Lawrence, this road being once completed.

The population of the section of Country in Canada, through which the Road passes, is over 100,000 Souls, exclusive of Montreal which contains over 50,000 ; a great portion of the country intersected by it is still in a wild state, but composed of the best timbered lands, and soil of richest quality, which will as soon as the route is open, be covered by a dense population. The returns of local passenger traffic in the State of Massachusetts, shew a return of 10s. per head, of the population through which each road passes.

The freight downwards being so much cheaper by the St. Lawrence, the same reasons must cause the upward freight to be cheaper, and the rule which applies to Cleveland, applies to Chicago and every intermediate port ;—an immense amount of Tea, Sugar, Fish, Oil, Molasses, Iron, bar, &c. Merchandise, Wines, &c., is forwarded by the Erie Canal, to Oswego and Buffalo, destined for the Western States, also for Upper Canada. The cheaper and speedier transit by the proposed route, must divert over it a large portion of this Trade.

So far, the inquiry has been confined to the causes which would create a traffic on this Road from the transportation of produce from one part of the United States, the West, to another, the East; but attention must be drawn to the local trade arising from the extensive water powers of the Country crossed by this Road, from the immense forests covered with pine and other valuable woods, which sawn would find a ready market in the States, as well as the West Indies, exclusive of the extensive supplies of sawed lumber from the Ottawa : The fuel required for the City of Montreal, must become an important *item* of traffic over this road ; from these several sources, the following estimate of probable traffic over the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Rail-Road, may not be considered exaggerated.

	Barrels.
Flour intended for State of Maine,	200,000
Manufacturing Districts of N. Hampshire and Massachusetts,	200,000
Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Fisheries,	200,000
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Barrels,	600,000

Shipment to West Indies, South America, and Europe,	- - - - -	500,000
		Flour, barrels
Indian Corn, say	- - - - -	200,000
		Total barrels,
		1,300,000

PROBABLE RECEIPTS FROM FOREGOING POSITIONS.

1,300,00 barrels flour at 1s. 2d.		£70,416 13 4
50,000 " Pork, " 1s. 6d.		37,500 0 0
Merchandise, 50,000 Tons 20s.		50,000 0 0
Cattle, Sheep, Pigs, Horses, &c.		2,500 0 0
Salt,	- - -	750 0 0
Lumber, 10,000 Tons,	at 10s.	5,000 0 0
Fuel, 30,000 Cords	at 5s.	7,500 0 0
Population, 100,000	at 10s.	50,000 0 0
Mails,	- - -	2,000 0 0
Foreign travel, 10,000	at 15s. *	7,500 0 0

Probable Gross receipts, £231,166 13 4

Deduct for expenses of working line, (In State of New York, 37 per cent of Receipts, in Massachusetts, 47 per cent)=to 42 per cent. 97,090 0 0

Probable net revenue, £134,076 13 4

* In this Estimate of Passenger traffic no estimate has been made of the number of Emigrants who are likely to adopt this Road to wend their way to the West. The Emigration to New York in 1848 was 200,000 souls. Their Transportation to the West is tedious and costly, removing from the Steamer to Canal Boats and again to Steamers, losing their luggage, &c.—It is understood that as soon as the Road is completed to Portland several large Shipowners in sending their vessels for Lumber to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, intend to seek Emigrants at the different Ports of Europe, land them at Portland, there take in Flour and other stores and proceed to their destination to load with timber. This is suggested to them by the advantages this Road will offer to Passengers who reaching Portland will immediately start for Montreal where those large Propellers will receive them and convey them at once to their destination, at a cheaper rate than by the New York route, and without being subjected to the same inconveniences. From this source alone in all probability 50,000 Passengers of Second Class can be reckoned upon producing at 7½ each an additional Revenue of £18,750, which has not been entered in this estimate.

which would give upon the total cost of the Road to the Lines, £780,000, including equipment, a little over 17 per cent, thus leaving a broad margin for any over-estimate of traffic; such results accruing upon the completion of the road, its position as a private undertaking is one highly favorable to all those who may have interested themselves in the speculation.

The advantages accruing to individuals must accrue to the Province, should the work be carried on by it, or through its means, exclusive of the benefits to be derived by the Province generally, and its inhabitants, from the completion of this Road.

Every new line of Rail-way made in a Country adds to its power. Rail-ways have become necessary to the age, and the Country which has them not, must fall behind in the onward march of improvement, and in the developement of its resources—and the longer it is suffered to do so, the greater and more unfavorable will be the contrast, which it will present to the world.

In the United States they are well aware of the increased value which internal improvements and communications give to property of every kind.

In those countries works have been undertaken for that object alone, not for the mere return which the work, whether rail-way, road, or canal, would make of itself.

The indebtedness of the several States has been incurred almost entirely in making great internal improvements. And in the coldness and unhesitating way in which they have incurred debts and responsibilities for the purpose of developing their resources may be seen the secret of their unrivalled prosperity.

The State is in debt, but its citizens have been enriched beyond all proportion.

Most unfavourable comparisons are made by travellers who visit the British Provinces and the United States. And some have gone so far as to state, that travelling along where the boundary is a mere conventional line, they could at once tell whether they were in the States or not.

On the one side the State Governments become shareholders to a large amount in great public works, *lead* the way, and do not hesitate

to incur debt, for making what has been termed "war upon the wilderness;" employment is given, and by the time the improvement is completed, property has been created and the *employed* become proprietors.

On the other side the Provincial Governments do not take the initiative in the same manner, and hence in the settlements and in the Provinces generally, may be seen this marked difference in the progress of people who are identically the same in every respect.

Until the British Provinces boldly imitate the policy of the States in this regard and make war upon their "wilderness," their progress will continue to present the same unfavourable contrast.

The creative or productive power of canals, rail-ways, &c., may be traced in the history and progress of the State of New York.

The Erie Canal was commenced in 1817, and completed in 1825, at a cost of 7,143,789 dollars, or £1,400,000 sterling. In 1817, the value of real and personal property in the City of New York, was from official documents estimated at £16,436,000 sterling. In 1825, it was estimated at £21,075,000 sterling. In 1829, the population of the State was 1,372,000, and in 1840 the population of the States was 1,918,000.

The canal was found so inadequate to the traffic, that between the years 1825 and 1845, a further sum of £4,600,000 was expended in enlarging it.

Making the total cost to that date £6,000,000 st. or \$30,000,000.

It has been seen that in the City of New York—

In 1817, the official value of real and

	personal property was	£16,436,000
1835,	- - -	£45,567,000

Being an increase of $2\frac{3}{4}$ times in 18 years.

For the state of New York—

In 1817, the official value of real and

	personal property was	£63,368,000
1835,	- - -	£110,120,000

Or an increase of nearly £45,000,000 sterling in the value of property, attributed chiefly, if not entirely, to the formation of the canals.

In 1836, the amount conveyed to tide water by the canal was 697,357 tons.

And on the 1st July of that year there had accumulated in the hands of the commissioners an amount sufficient to extinguish the whole of the outstanding debt incurred in its construction.

The net receipts from all the State Canals, after deducting the expenses of collection and superintendence, for the year 1847, was £449,270.

Villages, towns and cities, have sprung up along its course.

The population of the State, which was—

In 1810	959,949
was in 1845	2,604,495

In 1846 the value of real and personal property was estimated at £128,500,000.

It will be seen from the above, therefore, that in addition to the wealth created for individuals, the canals produce a large annual revenue to the State.

The following extracts from the financial affairs and statistics of some of the States, may be quoted in illustration of this part of the subject.

1847.

Massachusetts.

Total indebtedness of the State, 1st

January, 1847,	\$999,654
Credit of the State, lent to Rail-roads	5,049,555
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Total liabilities of the State,	\$6,049,209
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As security for the redemption of the scrip lent to Rail-roads, the Commonwealth holds a mortgage on all the roads, and also 3000 shares in the Norwich and Worcester, and 1000 in the Andover and Haverhill.

Pennsylvania.

Public property, canals and rail-

roads at original cost,	\$28,657,432
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Maryland.

Receipts from Baltimore and Ohio

Rail-road,	\$42,402
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Ditto from Canal Companies,

11,550

North Carolina.

Debt of the State, on account of Rail-road Companies,	\$1,110,000
	<i>Ohio.</i>
Debt contracted for the sole purpose of the construction of Public Works within the State,	\$19,246,000
Canals, 820 miles in length, cost	15,122,503
Net receipts in 1846, after paying repairs and expenses,	408,916
In 1810 the population of this State was	45,000
In 1820 - - - - -	581,434
In 1840 - - - - -	1,519,467

or tripled nearly in twenty years, during the progress of her canals.
Michigan.

Debt on 30th November, 1845,	\$4,394,510
Total length of Rail-roads finished and <i>belonging</i> to the <i>State</i> , 222 miles.	

The consequence of those several States taking a part in the construction of Rail-roads has been a large increase of the public revenue, as well as an increased value of the property of every citizen in each State, as seen by the immense difference in the assessed value of property at different periods before and after the construction of these works—in Massachusetts the value of property has tripled within ten years.

It may be contended that a State has no right to interfere in undertakings such as Rail-roads, which ought to be left to individual enterprise; but it must not be forgotten that it is the first duty of every nation, as well as for its interest, to afford its citizens, by every means in its power, the facilities for the acquisition of the conveniences of life, and even the means of acquiring wealth; for the wealth and happiness of every nation are but the aggregate wealth and happiness of its people; so that every measure which is calculated to promote the welfare and happiness of individual communities, a wise government will be willing and ready to adopt.

Apart from those considerations affecting the welfare of every individual in the community, the trade to be created by the St.

Lawrence and Atlantic Rail-road must become a source of direct revenue to the Province from the tolls to be levied on the produce coming from, and going to, the west, passing through our public canals, which now finds its way through other channels to the seaboard of the United States. Nor can limits be fixed to the extent of the produce of the West which may thus find its way over our canals; the immense extent and fertility of the west will hardly find bounds to its productive powers. On reference to official reports, it will be found that the produce shipped west of Detroit intended for eastern markets was in 1834—0—nothing, in 1845 it required over Two hundred thousand tons of shipping to bring down the produce raised west of Detroit! and at this rate of production and progression, with all the facilities for transportation the several proposed channels offer, still before many years elapse they will all be fully occupied, and the cry will still be, make more room for the produce of the west.

The advantages to be derived from the immense amount of shipping which this new trade will require must be apparent to every one. It will give an impetus to ship-building, erection of foundries for steam machines, require the erection of storehouses, give employment to a large number of hands as crews, machinists, and labourers, besides drawing into the Province large amounts of capital, which will thus find a profitable investment.

To the Provincial revenue the trade to be created by the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Rail-road, predicated on the foregoing calculations would bring, in the shape of tolls on passing our canals, say—

On 1,350,000 barrels of flour, pork, &c. at 9d.---- £50,625 0 0

On 50,000 tons merchandize upwards, at 7|6---- 18,750 0 0

£69,375 0 0

or nearly Seventy thousand pounds annually; and it would be safe to say that after this route will have been fully established, this amount will increase as the great facilities offered by it become better known.

The following tables of the Length, Cost, and Returns of the several Rail-Roads in the State of Massachusetts, which are entirely dependent on local traffic, and without possessing the advantages of being such thoroughfares as the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Rail-Road will become, still shew very handsome dividends, although as yet these Roads are but in their infancy, and that several of them interfere with each other, being rivals.

RAIL-ROADS IN MASSACHUSETTS.

NAME OF ROAD.	Length of Road in Miles.	Total Cost of Road and Equipment	Cost per Mile.	Dividend for 1847.
Boston and Lowell,.....	26	1,956,719	75,258	8
Boston and Maine,.....	73	3,021,172	41,385	9
Boston and Providence,.....	48	2,545,715	53,014	7½
Boston and Worcester,.....	58½	4,113,609	70,318	8
Connecticut River,.....	38	1,106,156	30,714	7
Eastern,.....	58	2,937,206	50,641	8
Fall River,.....	42	1,070,988	25,499	*
Fitchburgh,.....	51½	2,406,723	46,732	10
Lexington and West Cambridge,.....	6½	221,309	34,047	*
Nashua and Lowell,.....	14½	500,000	35,087	10
New Bedford and Taunton,.....	21	483,882	23,042	8
Norwich and Worcester,.....	66	2,187,256	33,140	*
Old Colony,.....	44	1,636,532	37,196	6½
Pittsfield and New Adams,	19	446,352	23,492	*
Western,	118	6,982,233	59,171	*

The Cost of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic Rail-Road, (under \$25,000 per mile) being on the average much less than that of the above Roads and the traffic likely to be greater, there can be no doubt but that the Returns will be equal to the estimate herein made, and that it will become a profitable investment to those who may have taken stock.

To the Public, this Road will offer the best security for any

* Reports of Dividends not furnished.

Legislative aid it may receive, whether in the shape of Loan to the Road, or by Stock being taken by the Province, or by the Credit of the Province being given to the Road, to ensure its being extended to the lines. It will complete the magnificent chain of communications between the East and West through Canada, and tend to render productive those great Works of the Province, which, without this Road, must be considered as incomplete.

GEORGE DESBARATS.

Montreal, 22d February, 1849.

